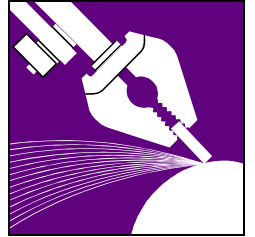


WORK-BASED LEARNING

Manufacturing

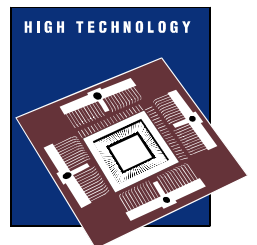


INTRODUCTION

One of the most compelling reasons to invest in the development of a School-to-Careers system is the opportunity to develop a comprehensive sequence of progressive work-based learning experiences for students. The focus of the School-to-Careers initiative is to realign the disconnect between what students are preparing for and the needs of business/industry/labor. Few would argue that any student in New Mexico's school system would not benefit from experiences gained at an actual worksite, regardless of anticipated educational attainment. The School-to-Work Opportunities Act requires each local partnership to develop a comprehensive work-based learning component to complement its school-based component as well as its connecting activities.

This section of the manual will define work-based learning; each of the required components found in the School-to-Work Opportunities Act; discuss different types of work-based learning, and critical elements you need to address when planning your work-based learning component.

One of the major concerns that has surfaced since the 1994 enactment of the School-to-Work Opportunities Act pertains to the placement of students at actual worksites. The law places significant emphasis on recruiting employers to serve as workplace mentors but very little guidance on its interplay with the Fair Labor Standards Act, child labor laws, and insurance and liability issues. Rather than mix this information in with this discussion on work-based learning, we encourage you to seek clarification on these issues from the appropriate sections of this manual.



WORK-BASED LEARNING

DEFINING WORK-BASED LEARNING

The School-to-Work Opportunities Act describes three major components necessary to have a successful School-to-Careers system. In addition to school-based learning and connecting activities, the law calls for work-based learning, which provides students with a planned program of job training and other employment experiences related to a chosen career.

- **Work-based Learning** is defined as consisting of work experiences; a coherent sequence of job training and work experiences that are coordinated with the activities in the school-based learning component; workplace mentoring; instruction in general workplace competencies such as positive work attitudes, employability skills, and participatory skills; and broad instruction in all aspects of business/industry. The work-based component may include a variety of activities including paid work experiences, job shadowing, school-sponsored enterprises, service learning and on-the-job training for academic credit.

However, we must point out that a significant distinction exists between the terms “work-based learning” and “worksite-based learning.” Work-based learning is generally used to describe any learning in which a student participates that has a relationship to an actual worksite. Worksite-based learning is different in that this learning process actually takes place in the private sector. Some forms of work-based learning can be carried out at the school-site or other locations established by the local partnership.

WORK-BASED LEARNING COMPONENTS

As defined, the work-based learning component of the School-to-Work Opportunities Act consists of five mandatory elements (See Chart). The main objective of the work-based learning component is to ensure that schools provide students with a planned program of job training and other employment experiences related to a chosen career pathway.

Key Elements of Work-Based Learning

- Work Experience
- Job Training
- Workplace Mentoring
- Instruction in Workplace Competencies
- Instruction in All Aspects of an Industry



WORK-BASED LEARNING

WORK EXPERIENCE

Actual on-the-job experience is a vital part of the overall work-based learning component. One of the first obstacles you will encounter as you design your work-based component will be providing an adequate number of worksite-based learning opportunities. The second hurdle that must be overcome is determining which work-based and worksite-based learning experiences will be paid and which will be non-paid. From the federal perspective, you possess total autonomy to make this decision. You should note that partnerships that place a priority on providing students with high-quality, paid work experiences are ranked higher in the federal system.

In general, the School-to-Work Opportunities Act provides local partnerships with considerable latitude in developing work-based learning components:

- It does not specifically require partnerships to provide a minimum amount of paid work experience or to establish a point in the program when paid work experience must occur.
- School-based enterprises can provide the context in which the paid work experience requirement is met.
- Non-paid work experience, such as job shadowing, on-the-job training for academic credit and service learning, may complement the paid work experience.

JOB TRAINING

Another mandatory activity under the work-based learning component is the provision of a planned program for offering job training and work experiences, and it must include training related to pre-employment skills. The program should provide a series of experiences mastered by the student at progressively higher levels. These activities must be:

- Coordinated with the school-based learning component;
- Relevant to the career majors of students; and
- Designed to lead to the award of skill certificates.

The local partnership also must ensure a close connection between the academic learning taking place at the school-site and the occupational learning occurring at the worksite. This coordination will require close cooperation between the business and education partners at every step, from initial program planning to full implementation. If the school-based and work-based components are not closely coordinated, the work-based component will fail, and the future involvement of business/industry/labor in educational initiatives will be jeopardized.



WORK-BASED LEARNING

WORKPLACE MENTORING

The local School-to-Careers initiative will not raise the standards for students unless the student's time at the worksite is carefully coordinated. For years, students have participated in work-based learning experiences, but integration of work-based learning experience with learning at the school-site has taken place at only a limited number of sites. For School-to-Careers, the difference is that each student placed into a worksite-based learning experience must have a workplace mentor.

- **Workplace Mentor** is defined as an employee at the workplace, or another individual approved by the employer, who possesses the skills and knowledge to be mastered by a student.

Special educators, vocational rehabilitation counselors, job coaches and work-study coordinators all may serve as workplace mentors for students, including those with disabilities. The workplace mentor will be responsible for many tasks:

Workplace Mentors

The workplace mentor will play a key role in successful partnerships between education and employers. The mentor is an employee at the workplace, or another individual approved by the employer, who possesses the skills and knowledge to be mastered by the student.

Mentors will be responsible for:

- Critiquing the student's performance;
- Challenging the student to perform well;
- Working in consultation with classroom teachers and the employer.

To coordinate the student's activities effectively, the workplace mentor must understand both the technical aspects of the student's employment area and the school-based learning component that complements it.

The local partnership has considerable flexibility under this component. If the workplace mentor requires special training to fill his or her role effectively, the local partnership may utilize funds obtained under the School-to-Work Opportunities Act to ensure that individuals serving as mentors are knowledgeable in the relevant employment areas, school-based curricula, and other program policies.

Sales



WORK-BASED LEARNING

INSTRUCTION IN WORKPLACE COMPETENCIES

Adequate academic and technical knowledge is only one prerequisite of a well-rounded employee in a high-performance workplace, which requires a host of general skills, such as teamwork, problem solving, and critical thinking. The School-to-Work Opportunities Act requires each program to provide instruction in general workplace competencies, including the development of positive work attitudes and employability and participative skills.

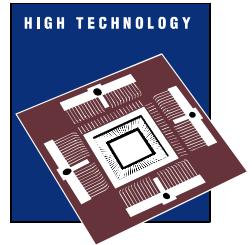
When students learn these skills in a workplace setting, they retain them longer and understand how to apply them in the context of a real-work situation.

INSTRUCTION IN ALL ASPECTS OF AN INDUSTRY

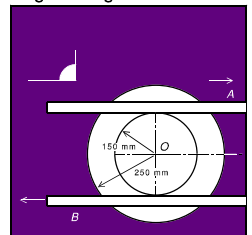
The last element that must be provided under the work-based learning component is broad instruction, to the extent practicable, in all aspects of the industry in which participating students have an interest in.

- **All Aspects of an Industry** is defined as all characteristics of the industry or industry sector the student is preparing to enter—including planning, management, finances, technical and production skills, and technology, labor, community, and health and safety and environmental issues related to that industry.

This term also includes the array of occupations and careers that comprise an industry, from the most basic to the most advanced. Research indicates that the average worker will change occupations four to seven times throughout his or her working life. The education and training that School-to-Careers students receive must be broad enough to give them a solid career foundation and the skills for adapting to changing environments.



Engineering

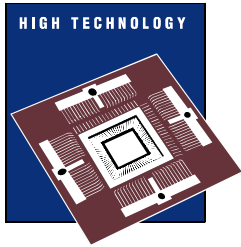


WORK-BASED LEARNING

WORK-BASED LEARNING INVENTORY

Use the following assessment to determine which work-based learning opportunities you currently offer and which additional ones you would like to incorporate into your School-to-Work system.

Currently Exists	Does Not Exist	Needs To Be Added	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Coordinated and integrated classroom and workplace learning
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Integrated academic and occupational-technical curriculum
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Individualized student training plans
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Rotation of students through different jobs ("all aspects of the industry")
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Wages or stipends for students participating in work-based learning (WBL)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Periodic evaluation of student progress
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Formal program of career awareness, orientation, and guidance
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Formal assessment and certification of skills based on industry standards
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Recognized credentials of academic and occupational mastery for completers
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Recruitment of targeted student groups
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Preparatory or remedial services to enable students to enter WBL
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Transitional services for special needs populations/at-risk students
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Job placement for WBL graduates
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Guaranteed hiring of qualified graduates by participating employers
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Formal articulation agreements with secondary school WBL programs
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Funded Tech Prep program
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Mentors or coaches for students in the workplace
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Training and credentialing of workplace mentors or coaches
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Regular consultation between workplace mentors and college faculty
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Inservice education on WBL concepts for college faculty and staff
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Training of college faculty and staff conducted by business
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Training of college faculty and staff in the workplace
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Incentives to increase WBL participation by business, trade organizations, unions, community-based organizations, or others
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Formal contracts or cooperative agreements with institutional partners
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Formal governing/advisory board composed of institutional partners



WORK-BASED LEARNING

SCHOOL-TO-WORK TEMPLATE				
WORK-BASED COMPONENTS	STAGE OF SYSTEM BUILDING			
	Vision	Planning	Early Implementation	Maintaining The System
Recruit employers				
Recruit unions				
Maintain support and participation of employers and unions				
Adopt work-based learning curricula				
Offer a continuum of work-based learning (job shadowing, structured work experience, paid work experience, and service learning)				
Provide alternative strategies for work-based learning				
Develop and implement community-based service learning				
Structure a planned program of training, including individualized student worksite learning plans				
Place and support students in the workplace				
Provide employee development to ensure quality work-based learning				
Review health, safety, and legal issues				
Document general workplace competencies				
Establish occupational skill standards				
Serve all students and provide equal access				

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WORK-BASED LEARNING

